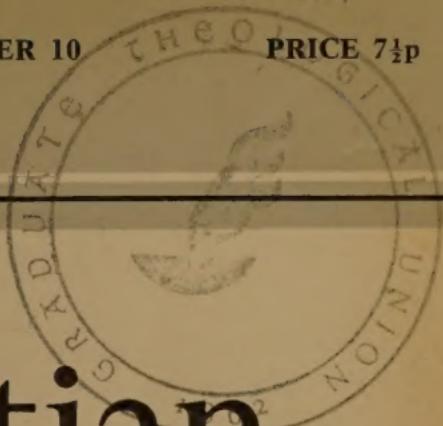


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# Christian Order

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MORE LIKE THIS, PLEASE

*Paul Crane, S.J.*

INFLATION (1)

*J. M. Jackson*

# Thank You

for all the help, given with such tireless generosity, to extend the circulation of *Christian Order* during the past twelve months.

At the beginning of December, 1973 circulation stood at 4,300. An accurate spot check made in August of this year showed the circulation of *Christian Order* as standing at 5,500—a rise in circulation of 1,200 in 8 months. This month, November, circulation is getting close to the 6,000 mark. Help it, please, to get there by Christmas.

Doing so means the continuation into the months ahead of the wonderfully prompt generosity with which subscriptions have been renewed during the past twelve months and the extraordinary zeal, which has led so many readers to bring *Christian Order* to the notice of their friends and, very often, to take out subscriptions on their behalf. It is this—the magnificent support of our readers—which has produced, this past year, without aid of advertisement, a rise in circulation that is extraordinary by any standards.

For all this help from readers the Editor is more grateful than he can say. He thanks them from the bottom of his heart and asks them, for the sake of the cause in which he and they believe, to keep up the good work.

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*Christian Order* is a monthly magazine devoted to the promulgation of Catholic Social Teaching and incisive comment on current affairs in Church and State; at home and abroad; in the political, social and industrial fields.

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# Christian Order

EDITED BY

Paul Crane SJ

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## Distasteful Invitation

THE EDITOR

IN his 1972 Christmas message, Dr. Philip Potter, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, quite openly and falsely identified the salvation from sin which Christ brought to men through his death and resurrection, with their liberation from all forms of earthly oppression: "Everywhere", said Dr. Potter, "there are liberation movements struggling against political, economic, racial, social and male oppression. The word 'liberation' frightens many Christians, especially those who are citizens of countries which one way or the other maintain or support the oppression of people. But 'liberation' is a good biblical word, for that is what 'salvation' means". Liberation in aid of a bettered human condition is now the self-confessed aim of Dr. Potter and his friends on the World Council of Churches.

In promotion of this aim, it is extremely important to note that original and perfectly valid ecumenical objectives have now been jettisoned in order that the w.c.c. may help build "the wider community which God intends for people of all faiths, cultures and ideologies". What is sought now by the w.c.c. is not the union of Christians in Truth, but a community of all men, whether Christians or not, in pursuit

of humanist goals and stimulated by a secularist ideology: there has, in other words, to be a new "religion" promoted by the W.C.C., devoid of supernatural context and trimmed to the needs of the world community which it is designed to enclose in a new secularist "faith". The name chosen by the W.C.C. for this ugly ideology, based on the supposed needs of secular man, is "secular ecumenism".

This is the witch's brew that came out of the W.C.C. Conference at Bangkok last year (1973); this is the New Faith of Secular Man that is presumably going to be proclaimed loud and clear by the W.C.C. at its Fifth Assembly at Jakarta in 1975. It was admirably described by Canon Albert de Bois of the American Episcopalian Church in a sermon preached on June 9th, 1974. Speaking of the new secular creed of the W.C.C., which is quite alien to the Christian Gospel, he said of it:

"1) Christ is no longer the unique gift of God but simply a 'man for others' — one of many teachers God has sent to various cultures — a good example.

2) There is to be a moratorium on seeking to convert. Dialogue is substituted for Christ's great Commandment to go, teach, to the ends of the world; dialogue in the hope of creating a new, man-made religion out of bits and pieces of Buddhism, Islam, Mao-ism, Marxist-revolutionary and man-centered liberation efforts and such elements of Christianity as do not give offence. It seems to me significant that the Orthodox Church in Russia is now going to support the W.C.C. financially.

3) The W.C.C.'s agents are to be seen at every Christian assembly around the world, downgrading the gospel, the priesthood and the Church and promoting a false ecumenism — that is, false efforts to unify Christians on a humanistic, man-centered programme that would throw out most of those revealed truths which, for example, are the foundation stones of this parish (where the Canon was preaching. — Ed.).

4) God is relegated to a position somewhat like that of a constitutional monarch, who condescends from time to time to emerge from his remoteness to approve of our efforts to

create Utopia on earth, without the need for any real help from Him."

Given the truth of this description, which we have no reason whatsoever to doubt, why should we Catholics have anything to do with the W.C.C. or its new bogus religion. Why indeed?

In the light of the above, one can only conclude with Bernard Smith, to whom the writer of this article is greatly indebted<sup>(1)</sup>, that "the sociologists and radical theologians who staff the higher levels of the W.C.C. have purged Christianity of all reference to the divine and have subordinated it to the needs of revolution. For them, sin means social injustice, faith is human betterment and salvation is civil rights. Perhaps their secret — if they have one — is that they no longer believe in God. Certainly their strange and pagan ideology has nothing to do with the faith laid down in the historic creeds of the Christian Church". Why, then, should we Catholics have anything to do with the W.C.C. or its new bogus religion? Why indeed?

I ask this the more confidently in view of Pope Paul's address at a General Audience at Castel Gandolfo on July 31st, 1974 (*L'Osservatore Romano*, 8/8/74). In it, he distinguished firmly between true and bogus liberation, repudiated the latter and, with it, by implication I presume, the "secular ecumenism" of the W.C.C. The Catholic Church can have and can want no part of that bogus creed.

Why, then, did Cardinal Willibrands invite Dr. Philip Potter, shortly before the Holy Father spoke, to address the Bishops assembled for this year's Synod at Rome? Why? Surely, they have better things to do, when they are there, than submit their minds to the outpourings of a secular humanist? I am sure I am not alone in finding the invitation distasteful, and the confused state of mind it would appear to reveal in high places within the Church distressing to a pronounced degree.

(1) See his two articles in *East-West Digest*, Vol. 10, Nos. 11 & 14; also his monthly publication, *Open Eye* obtainable from 124 Heath Park Road, Gidea Park, Essex at an annual subscription of £1.

Almost by chance, the Author of this and two subsequent articles, turned them up some months ago in MSS. form in the bottom of a drawer where they had lain forgotten for some years. The MSS. was written and put to one side before the changes which came to the Church in the wake of the Council. It is important to note this, for those who read these most moving articles will be struck by certain parallels with our own day, which are the more powerful for not having been intended; they should cause us all to pause and think. As an historian of the Elizabethan period, Father Caraman, of course, needs no introduction. It is a privilege to publish his work.

## Elizabethan Catholics and the Mass

I: GATHERING STORM

PHILIP CARAMAN, S.J.

QUEEN Mary died on 17 November 1558 while Mass was being celebrated in her bed-chamber. No day had passed in her adult life without her hearing Mass. When the priest came to the words, *Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi*, she answered distinctly *Miserere nobis, dona nobis pacem*; then, as he took the Host to consume it, the Queen adored it. Afterwards she closed her eyes for the last time.

### *Elizabeth Proclaimed Queen*

Between eleven and twelve o'clock the same morning

Mary's half-sister, Elizabeth, was proclaimed Queen by the heralds of arms. In the afternoon the bells of all the London churches were rung for joy; that night bonfires were lit and tables set out in the streets; there was plentiful eating, drinking and merry-making. The next day, Friday, being a fast day, there were no public rejoicings, but on Saturday 19 November, the *Te Deum Laudamus* was sung in all the churches of the kingdom.

During her last sickness Queen Mary had sent messengers to Princess Elizabeth to examine her on her religious beliefs, for no one was certain exactly where she stood. "Surely the Queen must be persuaded that I am a Catholic, for I have protested this time and again", Elizabeth assured her. Then she swore and vowed that she was a Catholic. She said she believed in the Real Presence and would make no alteration in the principal points of religion.

Today people are free to profess whatever religion they choose; then it was different. Until Henry VIII, the father of Mary and Elizabeth, came to the throne, the only religion of Europe was the Catholic religion. It was thought that anyone who did not believe in it was wilfully wrong. If he persisted or tried to propagate his beliefs, he was imprisoned as a heretic and sometimes burnt at the stake. Queen Mary had done this; earlier still the English soldiers in France had burnt Joan of Arc; she was thought to be directed by the devil, though, in fact, she was a saint. It was accepted by all that the State was bound to save the souls of its citizens from contamination by false doctrine, just as much as it was bound to protect their lives and property from murderers and highwaymen.

No one thought it possible for different religions to exist side by side in the same country. So it happened that, when Martin Luther and others started the Protestant religion and converted to it German, Swiss and other rulers, the entire area governed by them became Protestant. If any individual felt in conscience that he could not fall in with the new religion of his country, he left his home and went to another city, which adhered to his own religion.

On Mary's death the question that concerned everybody was whether the new Queen, Elizabeth (and with her the whole of England) would remain Catholic or turn Protestant. Elizabeth was astute and did not show her hand at once. The truth is that she did not care very much about religion, but wanted to be secure on her throne, and thought she had more chance of this if eventually she declared herself a Protestant.

It so happened that, within twenty-two hours of Queen Mary's death, there died also the Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Reginald Pole. And nearly at the same time, there died no less than thirteen Bishops and a great number of the clergy from quartan fever, which was then raging like the plague. Thus, by chance, a great barrier to a change in religion was removed.

The first weeks of the new reign passed and the people were still puzzled. Elizabeth delayed at Hatfield in Hertfordshire before taking possession of London. In preparation for her entry all the streets of the city were spread with gravel. Then, finally, she came, riding a horse apparelled in purple velvet. She passed through Cripplegate and along London Wall to Bishopsgate, then up Leadenhall and Fenchurch Street, turning down Mark Lane into Tower Street and so to the Tower. There was great shooting of guns, such as had never been heard before. At certain points along the route children made speeches to her; in other places groups sang songs to the accompaniment of portable organs. However, the uncertainty about her religion continued.

### *First Signs of Protestantism*

On 9 January 1559, just seven weeks after Mary's death, a statue of St. Thomas of Canterbury, patron of England, which had stood for centuries over the door of the chapel attached to the Mercers' Hall in London, was thrown down and broken. The offence went unpunished and some persons took this as an omen for the future.

The coronation was fixed for Sunday 15 January 1559 in Westminster Abbey, which was decorated for the event with

the most precious tapestries ever seen, representing on one side the whole of Genesis and, on the other, the Acts of the Apostles, from designs by Raphael. The rooms off the Church were hung with the history of Caesar and Pompey. On a table at the buffet were laid out a hundred and forty gold and silver drinking cups.

After making her entry into the Church the Queen ascended a lofty tribune erected between the high-altar and the choir, in view of all the people, who were asked if they wished her to be crowned. When they shouted "yes", the organs, fifes, trumpets and drums played, and it seemed, as an eye-witness reported, that the world had come to an end.

Then the choristers began the Mass which was sung by the Dean of her Chapel.

As senior prelate in England, Nicholas Heath, Archbishop of York, had been asked to crown the Queen. He had refused, for he suspected there would be innovations in the service. All the other bishops had refused also, except the Bishop of Carlisle, not because he favoured the Protestant religion but for fear that, if the Queen was angered that no one would anoint her, she might be more easily moved to overthrow the Catholic faith. The rest of the Bishops were present at the ceremony until the point of the Mass when the host is elevated, for adoration. This was not done, for the Queen had forbidden it.

Other changes ordered in the days following the coronation confirmed that Archbishop Heath had been right. On 25 January Elizabeth was once more at the Abbey, with all the peers of the realm, for the Mass of the Holy Ghost, before the opening of Parliament. The Benedictine Abbot John Feckenham, and all his community, each of them carrying a lighted candle in his hand, met her in procession at the West Door. When the Queen saw them, she said angrily, "Away with those torches, for we can see very well". During the service, Dr. Richard Cox, a married priest, who had been an exile during Mary's reign, preached a sermon in which, after saying many abusive things about the monks, he exhorted the Queen to destroy all the images of the saints, the

monasteries and all that went with Catholic worship. He tried to prove that it was a very great impiety to endure such superstitious survivals.

Nevertheless for a time the administration of the sacraments continued in all the churches, though the litanies of the saints were no longer recited and parts of the Mass were said in English. Plays were performed in derision of the Catholic faith, but no one was persecuted: placards were posted at street corners inviting passers-by into taverns to watch them. Churches were broken into, windows shattered and chalices stolen. In March the same year rogues raided St. Mary-le-Bow's, in the middle of Cheapside, burst open the tabernacle and smashed every sacred object on which they could lay their hands.

About the same time the last public Catholic funeral was seen in London. On 12 April the corpse of Sir Rice Mansfield was brought from Clerkenwell for burial from Blackfriars church; two heralds went behind the coffin and twenty-four priests and clerks went before it, singing the Office of the Dead. The church of the friars was draped with black cloth and coats of arms. The next day the Requiem was sung and, after it, the knight's standard, coat, helmet and target were offered up at the high altar as had been done for centuries past. For it was the customary manner of a knight's funeral. London was never to see this ceremony again.

### *Plea from an Archbishop*

Meanwhile Nicholas Heath, the Archbishop of York, (he had opposed the burning of heretics under Queen Mary and was considered the most prudent man in the kingdom) had an audience of the Queen. As soon as he was alone with her, he fell on his knees and invoked with tears the name of Jesus Christ. He begged Elizabeth, being a woman, to refrain from tampering with the sacred mysteries. He said that he had been through the English schools and universities and had attained the highest honours; he had been a bishop under her father, Henry VIII, and her brother, Edward VI and Lord

Chancellor under Mary, and that from his experience in the course of a long life, to say nothing of his own studies, he had learnt that the State suffered great harm from frequent changes, even in the laws relating to the administration of justice. How much greater harm, he argued, would result from alterations in religion, where antiquity was held at such great account.

It was a wise and moderate speech. The Archbishop, recalling all that had recently happened, said that it was now proposed to make changes, not simply in ceremonies, but in the highest mysteries of the Faith, which (as the name implied) should be reverenced in silence rather than made the subject of popular debate. To call in question the sacraments of the Church, after such a length of time and in a kingdom which had only recently recovered from schism, would be disastrous in the extreme.

Finally, asking the Queen's pardon for his freedom of speech, the Archbishop concluded: "But if (which God avert) the Catholic religion should unhappily be overthrown in England, I warn, I proclaim and I declare beforehand that I will not recede a nail's breadth in the least thing from the decrees of the Catholic Church, and in that quarrel I will resist every suggestion from others, and even from your Majesty, by every means in my power, to the last moment of my life".

The Queen bade him rise, comforted him with many words and ended by promising the Archbishop that she would do nothing that was not approved by her Councillors and by the whole nation assembled in Parliament. She gave him to think that in some measure she still wished to profess the Catholic Faith.

On 23 April, St. George's Day, the patronal feast of the Knights of the Garter, the Queen attended the customary ceremony at Westminster Abbey. During the procession not a single cross was carried. The following day Mass was sung as usual for the souls of the deceased knights, but the Queen, who was to have been present, altered her mind, and the Mass was said without the elevation of the host.

## *Returned Exiles Strike*

On 25 April, the feast of St. Mark and the last of the three Rogation Days, there were processions in the London parishes, and the citizens went with their banners through the streets, singing the litanies in Latin in the old fashion. On Ascension Day, while the parish procession of St. Paul's was going round the Cathedral precincts, a servant-lad, an apprentice to a Protestant printer, violently snatched the cross out of the hands of the bearer, struck it on the ground three times, breaking it into many small pieces. Then he took the figure from the cross and went off, saying as he showed it to some women, that he was carrying away the Devil's guts. In another London parish, on the same day, when the procession was about to come out of the church, two scoundrels with drawn swords in their hands placed themselves at the gate, swearing that ecclesiastics should not carry such an abomination, and that, if they left the church, they should never re-enter it.

This was the work of the men who had been in exile in Germany and Switzerland under Queen Mary. Now, one of their number, Richard Cox, boasted in a letter to a friend at Zurich: "We are thundering forth in our pulpits, and especially before our Queen, Elizabeth, that the Roman Pontiff is truly antichrist and that traditions are for the most part blasphemies"; but he went on to admit that none of the clergy had changed their beliefs. "The whole body", he said, "remains unmoved"; that is, loyal to the Old Faith.

## *Parliament and the Mass*

Meanwhile, in Parliament, a Bill laying down a new service of common prayer to replace the old Mass was debated. When it was read in the Lords for the third time all the Bishops, as before, dissented; and among the chief peers, they were supported by the Marquis of Winchester, the Earl of Shrewsbury, Viscount Montagu, and Barons Morley, Stafford, Dudley, Wharton, Rich and North.

True to his undertaking, Archbishop Heath spoke out firmly: "The unity of the Church of Christ doth depend upon the unity of Peter's authority. Therefore, by our leaping out of Peter's ship, we must needs be overwhelmed with the waters of schism, sects and divisions which spring only from this, that men will not be obedient to the Head Bishop of God".

The Archbishop asked the Lords whether they thought the Church of Rome was not of God, but a malignant Church, and then went on: "If you answer yes, then it will follow that we, the inhabitants of this realm, have not as yet received any benefit from Christ, for we have received no other gospel, no other doctrine, no other Faith, no other sacraments than were sent us from the Church of Rome".

Cuthbert Scot, Bishop of Chester, spoke twice. He pointed out that as God had sent one Holy Ghost to rule and govern his people inwardly, so he had appointed one Governor to rule and lead them outwardly. And he asserted that no temporal prince had any authority whatsoever in or over the Church, since the keys of the heavenly kingdom had never been given to any of them, but only to Peter. Abbot Feckenham of Westminster, who also sat in the house of Lords, compared Queen Mary's days to the present. Then no churches were spoiled, he said, no altars pulled down, nor was the sacrament ever trodden blasphemously under foot and the knave of clubs hung in its place; there was no defiant eating of meat in Lent and on prohibited days. Now all things were changed and turned upside down.

But these protests were of no avail. Things got worse. At the end of May the Queen's Councillors, who were the men responsible for the alterations in religion, summoned to their presence Edmund Bonner, the Bishop of London, and gave him orders to do away with the Mass and Divine Office at St. Paul's. The Bishop answered intrepidly: "I possess three things, soul, body and property: of the two last you can dispose at your pleasure, but as to the soul God alone can command me".

## *Last Public Masses in London*

A few days later, on 11 June, St. Barnabas' day, the last Mass was said at St. Paul's. By the end of the month there were no public Masses anywhere in London, except in the houses of the French and Spanish ambassadors. All the friars and monks of every Order received their passports to go abroad; the Franciscan friars from Greenwich, the Blackfriars from Smithfield, the monks and nuns from Sion and Westminster. The Carthusians refused to leave until they were compelled by force, which was soon used. Under the Queen's father, Henry VIII, they had resisted the King's attempt to claim headship of the Church, and had suffered death for it, some at Tyburn by hanging, others in Newgate from starvation. John Houghton, their prior, had been the first martyr of the Reformation. His community, re-established under Mary, was proud of its fidelity to the Church, and rather than give up their religion went into exile.

## *New Bill of Supremacy*

Now a new Bill of Supremacy, making the Queen Head of the Church, was passed in Parliament; and in the same session also a Bill of Uniformity that permitted only one form of worship, namely, the new form. Commissioners were sent out from London to visit the universities, the cathedral churches and the city parishes throughout England with the task of enforcing these measures. This was in the summer of 1559, less than a year after Elizabeth had given a solemn undertaking to her half-sister, Mary, that she would make no change in religion. There was great opposition in court to the new services and also among the clergy and people, and had it not been for the persistence of Sir William Cecil, the Queen's Chief Councillor, the reformation, as it was called, would certainly have failed.

The Queen's commissioners first visited the London churches. On their orders the rood screens and altars were pulled down. The Lord Major, returning on St. Bar-

tholomew's Day from the fair at Clerkenwell, where he had been watching sports and wrestling, saw in Cheapside two great bonfires made of statues, missals, crosses, copes, censers, altar-cloths, banners and other ornaments from Catholic times. The same was to be seen in other parts of London.

To show greater contempt for Our Blessed Lady, the official birthday of the Queen was now kept on 7 September, the eve of the nativity of Our Blessed Lady, which was marked in the calendar in small black letters, while that of Elizabeth was in large red capitals. In St. Paul's and elsewhere the praises of Elizabeth were now sung at the end of the public prayers in the place where the antiphon of Our Lady had been sung in former days.

### *Catholic Bishops Removed*

One by one the Catholic Bishops were removed from their sees. In a last brave attempt to change the Queen's mind Bishop Tunstall of Durham, who had been excused from attending Parliament because of his great age, came riding on horseback to London to see the Queen. In spite of her prohibition he preached to the people on his way. Everywhere he exhorted them to remain constant in the Catholic Faith. When the old man was brought into the presence of the Queen, he reprimanded her severely, because she had taken on herself to meddle in religion and had removed all the bishops, whose equals, he said, were hardly to be found in the Christian world.

"I confess", the Queen said, "that I grieve for York and Ely".

"But", replied Tunstall, "how can you grieve, when you have the remedy in your hands?"

The Councillors sat with the Queen. They urged Tunstall to change his religion. "Do you think that I, who as a priest and a bishop have taught the Catholic Faith for more than forty years, would be doing right, after so many years of study, after such practice and experience, on the very verge

of the grave, to accept a rule of faith from laymen, my juniors".

The Councillors flushed. Then they demanded that he should take the oath acknowledging the Queen's supremacy over the Church.

The old man refused, and he was deprived of his bishopric and put in charge of the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker, a married man. After a few weeks of imprisonment Tunstall died at Lambeth.

### *The Old Priests Removed*

Almost all the clergy were on the side of the Catholic Hierarchy. For as long as they were permitted, they spoke from their pulpits against the new form of service; they protested that it was iniquitous to do away with the Mass, the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, allegiance to the Pope and all that had been part of the English Church since the time of St. Augustine and indeed before him. One by one, as the Commissioners went their circuits, these old priests were removed: most of them refused to be ministers of the new religion. Many continued to say Mass secretly, hear confessions, and baptise children, either in their own homes or in the houses of gentlemen.

### *The Country Folk Stay Loyal*

For many years still the country people, particularly the shepherds and farmers, remained loyal to the old faith. In large towns, like Norwich and Bristol, the artisans, weavers and shoemakers for the most part fell in with the new forms of worship. But in the remoter parts of the kingdom, in Lancashire particularly, and in Westmoreland, Wales and Northumberland, both in the country and in the towns, the population as a whole stayed Catholic. Hence the reformers, writing to German friends, continued for many years to talk always of their "little flock". One of them, John Jewel, now Bishop of Salisbury, complained: "The papists (as Catholics

were now called) oppose us spitefully. Thus it is to have once tasted of the Mass. He who drinks of it is mad".

For the first time in the history of England, indeed of any country, fines were imposed for non-attendance at Church. This was the beginning of the persecution. In Winchester, which was strongly Catholic, the poor people who could not pay these fines were sentenced to be dragged through the streets, stripped of their clothes and cruelly whipped.

### *School and University*

The old school there, founded by William of Wykeham, remained Catholic in sympathy. When the headmaster was imprisoned and a Protestant put in his place, the boys refused to attend public prayers and shut themselves in their dormitories. The headmaster was compelled to summon the military commander from Portsmouth, the nearest sea-port, to restore order. About twelve boys took to flight: the rest, terrorised by the troops, went most unwillingly to church. As one chronicler wrote: "In this persecution there is no order, or sex or age that has not nobly defended the Catholic Faith".

The universities, which formerly had been the training places of the clergy, did not take to the changes. Nearly all the heads of Colleges and the Fellows gave up their posts rather than subscribe to the oath of Supremacy. By comparison with what it had been in the past, Oxford, particularly, was now somnolent. At New College, founded at the same time and by the same Catholic bishop as the school at Winchester, the old customs were slowly destroyed. On holidays after dinner the students no longer gathered round the fire in the hall to sing hymns. Many eminent university men crossed the seas to get a livelihood in foreign universities. Among them was Dr. William Allen, who was to become the chief adversary of the new religion.

### *First Arrest for Saying Mass*

The first arrest of a priest for saying Mass contrary to

the Queen's orders occurred in Fetter Lane, London. Treated as a traitor, the poor man was dragged violently through Holborn, Newgate Market and Cheapside to the Counter Prison, with all his vestments on him, for he had been caught at the altar. A crowd followed him, mocking, cursing and wishing evil to him: some said he should be set in a pillory, others that he should be hanged, or hanged and quartered, or burned. All tried to pluck at him or give him a thump with their feet or spit in his face. Some shouted at him *Ora pro nobis, sancta Maria*, because it was the feast of Our Lady's Nativity (1562), though the day was not kept holy; they also sang mockingly *Dominus vobiscum* and such like phrases from the Mass.

#### *Rosaries, Crucifixes, Statues—out*

So things continued. Every year saw new measures of suppression. No person was permitted to carry beads or use them for prayers, to read the Book of Our Lady's Hours, or to burn candles on the Feast of the Purification. It was forbidden to pray before a crucifix or statue or picture of a saint, and it was thought superstitious to make the sign of the cross on entering a church, or to say the *De profundis* for the dead, or even to rest at a wayside cross while carrying a corpse to the grave: and to leave little crosses there. All altars were taken down in the churches. The places where they had stood were now paved, and the wall into which they had been set whitened over. The altar stones were broken, defaced and turned to common uses.

But the people clung hard to the old customs. In some places, after the Rood had been taken away, they drew a cross in its place with chalk; and when the crosses in the graveyard were uprooted, they painted small crosses on the church walls inside and out, and on the pulpit and the new Communion tables. They still brought their primers to church and used them all the time the Lessons were being read. In many churches the chalices were hidden away in

readiness for the return of the Mass.

### *Elizabeth Excommunicated*

Finally, in 1570, the Pope, acting on his own counsels, issued a Bull, *Regnans in Excelsis*, declaring Elizabeth an heretic and excommunicate. Many Catholics at home judged this an unwise measure; for they feared it would enrage the Queen and lead her to retaliate with still severer legislation against them. However time proved the Pope correct. Now, for the first time, after eleven years of Elizabeth's reign, it was clear to all that none could practise the religion enforced by law and remain a Catholic. Henceforth if any man went to the state church he was no longer considered a Catholic; to receive communion there was a sign of submission to the new doctrines.

In reply the Queen imposed heavier fines for non-attendance at the services. Division now between Catholics and Protestants became sharper than ever before. Catholics, called Papists until this year, were now known as Recusants, for their refusal to take Communion from Protestant ministers.

In England only one man, Mr. Edward Aglionby, dared to raise his voice against the enforcement of conscience by legal penalties. In April 1571, in the House of Commons, Aglionby made a noble speech. He argued that it was not lawful for the State to compel any man's conscience, for the conscience of the individual did not concern the law-makers: it did not fall even within the power of the greatest monarchy in the world. And he showed that neither the Jews nor Turks had ever required more than silence from their subjects, when they were unable to accept their people's religion. If the Catholics were wicked, as the law made them out to be, it was strange and against Christian practice to force them to take the new Communion; rather they should be forbidden it.

## *The Coming of the Sects*

Meanwhile, as Archbishop Heath had warned the Queen, a large number of sects sprang up and spread throughout the kingdom. The largest of the many strange congregations was the Anabaptists, who called themselves Puritans, or Unspotted Lambs of God. Some of their adherents made mad assertions. In 1573 one, Mr. Bloss, was arrested for proclaiming that the Queen's late half-brother, King Edward VI, was still alive, that the Queen was married to the Earl of Leicester in 1564 and had four children by him.

The most curious of all these sects was "the family of the mount". It denied the existence of both heaven and hell, teaching that heaven existed wherever men laughed and made merry, and hell, wherever they were in sorrow, grief or pain.

The "family of essentials", a split or subdivision of the "family of love", believed that there was no such thing as sin. Their adherents used to ask, 'Sin? What sin, man? There is no man sinneth at all'. Their leader compared the altar to a cook's dresser-board. He had many meetings up and down the country.

*(To be continued)*

# Readings at Mass

FRANCIS FENN, S.J.

WE were thinking last month of prayer and of Christ as Mediator; in the first reading on October 20 we find Moses in the role of a mediator. This was their first military action since Israel had come out of Egypt, and it is the first mention of the man who would eventually lead them into the promised land: Joshua ("God is salvation"), of which a later form is Jeshua or, according to the Greek, Jesus.

The gospel reading (Luke 18,1-8) should be seen in the setting in which it was originally written: the Church, subject to calumny and persecution, longs for the Lord's return. The parable tells of a poor widow who had been the victim of some fraud and had to go to law. This did not mean the formal sitting of a court; a qualified lawyer could arbitrate, and a small town might have had only one such lawyer. So the widow had to persuade him to attend to her case. By Jewish law he would receive no payment; he had only a moral obligation to attend to cases brought before him. But this one was not sensitive to his obligations; he "had neither fear of God nor respect for man". "Unrighteous" is a better translation than "unjust".

Christians did not need to have doubts about the rightness of their cause; but they longed for vindication. The Jerusalem Bible translates a difficult sentence: "Will not God see justice done to his chosen who cry to him day and night even when he delays to help them?" Yes—but will Christians have faith in God's promise under all circumstances? The parable still has relevance today.

The theme of prayer connects this passage with the next (October 27). The only prayer acceptable to God

springs from a sense of deep-felt need; such was the prayer of the tax-collector (Latin *publicanus*). He was not of necessity dishonest, though the system lent itself to dishonesty (cf. Luke 19,8). The point is that he was an agent of the gentile world, and as such a social outcast. The Pharisee, on the other hand, was looked up to as a Jew *par excellence*—that was his intention (16,15)—and his self-satisfied complacency is reflected in his prayer. The last sentence in the reading is repeated from 14,11, where Pharisees are also involved.

Whatever good a man does, he cannot do more than he owes to God. This, perhaps, is the lesson of the little parable heard on October 6 (Lk 17,7 ff) the apparent harshness of which is mitigated when we realise that “servant” is literally “slave” and that the not-so-rich master had only one of them. If what God asks of us requires faith, as in the case of the unlimited forgiveness of others demanded by our Lord in 17,4 (the verse before our reading), then faith is what we owe to God. (1) For *Meribah* and *Massah* in the psalm on this Sunday, see Exodus 17,7.

Descriptions of “leprosy” in the Bible suggest a wide variety of skin diseases (see especially Leviticus 13-14) involving ritual “uncleanness” and consequent social ostracism. Nine of the ten lepers (Oct. 13) were presumably Jews: they must have had faith in the power of Jesus, otherwise it would have been pointless for them to have gone to the priests to be certified as “clean” (Lev.14,1). But they seem to have taken their cure as a matter of course, as though God’s blessings were theirs by right of birth.

A few notes now about the second readings from 2 Timothy, in order. 1. The grace of ordination (see also I Tim 4,14) is something permanent, but it does not work automatically, any more than that of baptism and confirmation. It is compared here to a fire which needs fanning into flame. It seems that Timothy was inclined to be timid (I Cor 16,10-11). “Love” in the context refers to self-

(1) Cf. W. Manson: *The Gospel of Luke*, p. 193.

sacrificing service: we know that Timothy suffered imprisonment for his faith (Hebrews 13,23).

2. The mention of David emphasises the kingship of Christ ("We shall reign with him" in the quotation from the, probably baptismal, hymn at the end of this reading). Similar words occur in Romans 1,3-4. "If we disown him (so JB) then he will disown us"—see Matthew 10,33.

3. "Since you were a child"—his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois (1,5) were converts from Judaism, and Jewish parents were expected to teach the Law to children of five onwards. Eunice would have been excommunicated by the Jews for marrying a pagan (Acts 16,1). "Holy scriptures" or "sacred writings" was a phrase current among Greek-speaking Jews to describe the Old Testament. St. Irenaeus (c. AD 180) is the first to use the phrase "New Testament"; but see 2 Peter 3,15. "The wisdom that leads to salvation": that is, a revelation of God's saving purpose. The key to Scripture is Christ. "All scripture is inspired by God"—cf. 2 Peter 1,21. The sentence seems to be modelled on Romans 15,4.

4. "Libation" or drink-offering: Paul expects to be put to death and sees the shedding of his blood in sacrificial terms (Exodus 29,40). "I have fought the good fight"—"the picture is not of warfare, but of an athletic contest, probably a wrestling match" (2). "Crown of righteousness"—the recompense for an upright life—recalls the laurel wreath given to champion athletes (cf. 2,5). "That day", i.e. of judgement—"the righteous judge" is perhaps contrasted with the Emperor's court, before which he had already made his "first defence". Paul used this preliminary investigation to proclaim the gospel, as in other previous trials (e.g. Acts 26). "Rescued from the lion's mouth"—extreme danger; in view of the following words, probably spiritual ("deliver us from evil").

(2) J. N. D. Kelly: *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 208.

“This simple maiden who is one of the marvellous women in the history of the world”.—Dr. Ludwig von Pastor.

# This Marvellous Woman: a Lesson for our own Times

GUY BRINKWORTH, S.J.

IN the torrid June of the year 1374 a young woman returned the forty miles from Florence to Siena to find her home town stricken with a resurgence of the Black Death which only a score of years before had claimed its 80,000 victims there. Immediately she threw herself into the fray and dedicated herself completely to taking physical and spiritual comfort to those who, deserted in panic by their friends and relatives, had been left to die abandoned and alone. Day and night she worked threading her compassionate way among the fetid piles of dead and dying humanity.

## *Fateful Year for Catherine*

It was a fateful year for Catherine Benincasa now twenty seven years of age, a real turning point in her short life, always so clearly guided by the finger of God. She had been a lively and cheerful child, (they nicknamed her Euphrosyne), with impressive eyes and lovely auburn hair. But quite early, as a result of what might have been a vision, she turned her whole considerable will and energy to union with her Lord and Master. All through her teen years she lived a hermit's life in the attic of the large Benincasa home, only going out to the near-by church of St. Dominic. She trained herself to an incredible minimum of sleep and physical food; her friends declared that she lived on the Eucharist and long hours of prayer alone. And it was during this period that she was received into the Third

Order of St. Dominic, the "Mantellates". Then came the second step in the divine Plan for her. As she approached nineteen years of age, during an ecstacy involving the "mystic espousal", the call came. Her Nazareth was over and, like her Spouse before her, she must take up her cell and carry it "on my back" into the violent and flamboyant world (it was the time of the Carnival) around her. Christ had symbolically taken her heart and "pressed it into Holy Church" and she knew vividly that henceforth all her talents, energies, strength and *love* were to be converged and focussed into "the Church which is the Body of Christ". There followed several more years of preparation—years filled with much prayer, some of it ecstatic; but also with the tireless visiting of the sick and ministration to the poor together with the spiritual guidance of a number of disciples who gathered round, recognising in her some profound mystical charism. Some, priests included, old enough to be her parents and yet would call her "santa mamma".

### *Areas of Malaise*

Shrewdly she soon diagnosed the areas of *malaise* in her beloved Church, where reform was too obviously needed. Conditions were chaotic — not so much doctrinally as "structurally". The Vicar of Christ no longer ruled from the traditional See of Peter—Rome—"that garden watered by the blood of martyrs", as Catherine put it. By violence and cunning, both physical and political, the Pope had been moved to Avignon to satisfy the conceit and power politics of a French monarch. This had brought about a bloody polarisation within the Church. Already the Tuscan League, led by the Florentines, was forming to oppose by force of arms the often slack and uninterested French papal legates who nominally ruled the Italian states and cantons. In defence, these legates were negotiating with foreign mercenary bands—among them the brutal and notorious Essex man, Hawkswood. Somehow unity and peace had to be

restored. Catherine saw that there were two lines of activity for reform open to her. The first was the direct one of persuading the Pope and particularly his Curia to eschew the fleshpots of Avignon and return voluntarily to the Eternal City of Peter. "But there are no French wines in Rome!" said one cynic of the time. The other, perhaps an indirect factor but not completely unconnected, was to provide a "counter-irritant". Some great single *cause* which would *unite* Christendom, be a rallying point: even a "safety-valve" for the war-like barons and kinglets of her yet feudal milieu. "If you must fight, then fight against the enemies of the Church" she wrote to Hawkswood—and got a promise out of him! For already the idea of a Crusade was a war for survival, already, with the Saracen hammering at the gates of Europe, the *motif* was shifting from the recovery of the Holy Places to one of sheer self-defence . . . But she was overtaken by events.

### *War and Peace*

For whilst she was visiting Florence during the year 1374, Catherine had seen and heard enough to convince her that open war between the Tuscan League and the foreign papal legates in Italy was imminent. She must act energetically, directly and immediately to forestall disaster. Somehow what appeared to her to be the root cause of the tension had quickly to be removed and the Pope persuaded to leave Avignon and return as soon as possible to the Eternal City. "Peace, peace, peace" became her cry and she redoubled her diplomatic efforts to succeed where others more influential than herself had failed. Already the "royal mystic", St. Bridget of Sweden, had laboured without permanent effect in the same cause. She had died only in the previous year, broken-hearted, her mission unaccomplished. Yet, in time, it would seem, to hand her torch to the young Sienese commoner. The third and final stage of the latter's public life thus began.

When we survey the situation in the perspective of six centuries, we cannot but be utterly amazed at the courage and determination of this humble lower middle-class girl, hermit turned politician, in undertaking such a formidable task which only a charismatic knowledge and dynamic conviction on her part of a God-given mission can possibly explain. The tempo accelerates and letters pour from her. We still have evidence of four or five hundred of them. Letters to cardinals, papal legates, bishops and religious superiors; to kings, queens, dukes and duchesses and other influential people—to the Pope himself. Yet, probably like her contemporary, four years her senior, the English mystic Julian of Norwich, she “coude no letter”. But to help her she had her devoted band of disciples who followed her wherever she went—the *famiglia*—the “caterinati” or “catherinists” as the scoffers called them. Many acted as her scribes, particularly the high-born and elegant poet, Neri Landoccio. Occasionally she would dictate separate letters simultaneously to three scribes. Shortly before her death, with that incredible energy so characteristic, she dictated in succeeding phrases frequently punctuated by trances of prayer to the three scribes and in four or five days, her classic work, the *Dialogues*—“the size of a Missal”. It is indeed a beautiful and profound treatise on prayer, penance and the spiritual life; much of it, though neglected, more than ever relevant today. A book which must have influenced the decision to confer on her the honour of being the first woman to be made a Doctor of the Universal Church; a title given immediately afterwards to St. Teresa of Avila as well. Nor in her letters, though ever humble and respectful, did she pull her punches. In them we find some very plain and courageous speaking. For her, as for her Master, the zeal of the Father’s House did not preclude the corded whip. The Cardinal Papal Legate of Bologna she exhorts forthrightly to be a “virile and not cowardly man, so that you manfully serve the Church . . .” Always womanly

herself, particularly in her complete loyalty, she constantly begged for "manfulness" among the leaders. For in her prayer it must have been revealed to her that so much of the agony of "Christ's Body which is the Church" was due to the self-seeking weakness and pusillanimity of those who assisted in its government. So, to the Vicar Apostolic she writes with superb fearlessness and from a heart "pressed into Holy Church": "I beg of you even if you have to die for it, tell the Holy Father to remedy all this iniquity, to make ministers and Cardinals, not for flattery, nor wealth, nor simony. But with all your power, implore him to look for virtue".

### *Higher Politics*

In 1374, the Hand of her Master had guided her by events to take the breath-taking plunge into the unfamiliar realm of "higher politics". Her efforts would seem to have been especially blessed for, in the following year, she was given the grace of the *Stigmata*: "Ah Lord, let the wounds not be seen!" And, in the atmosphere of this mystical union with "Christ Crucified"—her favourite phrase—the pangs of the invisible wounds in her own hands and feet and heart still agonising, she dictated one of her many letters to Pope Gregory XI, residing comfortably with his Curia in beautiful Avignon:

"Alas, alas, my sweetest Babbo, that is why those who should be obeying you are rotting with the foulness of evil . . . I hope therefore, Venerable Father, that with God's grace you will quench this self-love in you . . . I want you to be a true and good shepherd . . . If up till now you have not been strong-willed enough, I will and I pray that during the time that is left you, you behave manfully and like a strong man who follows Christ Whose Vicar you are . . . Fear not the storms that have broken, the corrupt limbs that have rebelled against you . . . Concentrate only on spiritual matters . . . I have heard that you have created some Cardinals.

Believe me, it would have been more to God's honour and in your own better interests always to choose men of virtue. Not to do this is to insult God and ruin His Church . . . ”

Was this young and uneducated young Dominican tertiary mad to write in such terms to the supreme spiritual Head of Christendom? Or was it Christ Crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Gentiles utter foolishness? Certainly those who knew her, conversed with her and read her ardent letters took her seriously as, after all, saints must be taken. They were in the best position to judge. They perceived clearly enough in and through her the pierced Hand and Heart of Christ. Thus when Catherine personally stormed Avignon with her *famiglia*—the ‘bella brigata’ they jokingly called themselves — Pope Gregory was kind and generous and held much converse with her. “Go manfully, God wills it” she reiterated: the result was inevitable. In September 1376, against every kind of curial and political pressure, Christ’s Vicar set out on his slow and hesitant five-hundred mile journey from his beloved bridges over the Rhone to the Eternal City, a rather lonely and ailing man.

### *Catherine’s Gethsemani*

The indefatigable Catherine and her devoted band were already back in Siena and Florence working to bring about the longed for truce and cessation of hostilities between the Florentine led “Tuscan League” and the church authorities. “Dolce babbo mio! Peace, peace, peace—for the love of Christ crucified!” At last the envoys of the newly elected Pope Urban VI carried the symbolic olive branch to Florence and Catherine knew that her Palm Sunday was over. A fearful premonition came over her. It was to be a terrible Gethsemani for her to realise that all her own efforts to bring the Chair of Peter back to its rightful place had led to the political chicanery of the French King and cardinals which ended with the bogus “election” of a French “anti-pope”, “Clement VII”, setting up his rival Curia in Avignon. The devil had returned with seven others. Alice Curtayne

in her beautiful and scholarly "St. Catherine of Siena" (Sheed and Ward) sums up the situation Catherine found herself in thus.

"There were now two Popes claiming allegiance, two Curias disputing every detail of administration, and the dark confusion which spread over Christendom was simply indescribable. The Clementines called the Urbanists' Mass a blasphemy; the Urbanists reprobated the Clementines' worship; in many places the Mass was discontinued. The nations grouped themselves slowly under the rival standards, but in no country was one obedience complete. The split in authority widened until the whole ecclesiastical fabric was rent and not one little entity within the great unity remained entire. Religious orders divided on the question and elected rival heads who made permanent the division. Even local monasteries could not agree . . . the very families of Christendom were sundered . . . If ever the Church proved that the principle of divine life was within her, it was in working herself out of this calamity . . . It was the finishing stroke to all Catherine's great hopes . . ."

### *Death of a Saint*

But for this woman of iron will and utter loyalty there was no time for despair or self-pity. Her beloved Church into which her heart had been divinely pressed was in greater need than ever. So, when the desperate Urban VI summoned, she and a score of her devoted *famiglia*, braving the roving bands of Clementine Breton mercenaries, rode hurriedly to his help. The Gethsemenai of much prayer and action dragged on. A year she spent in diplomacy, striving vainly to heal the ever widening and suppurating wound in Christ's Body. But the Angel of consolation came at last and he was the Angel of Death. On the third Sunday of Lent, utterly exhausted by her activity coupled with almost total fasting and long vigils of prayer, she dragged herself

to pray before Giotto's "Navicella", a representation of Peter's boat and Christ walking on the waters. In an ecstatic vision she saw the boat emerge from the mosaic and felt its crushing weight on her shoulders and she was pressed to the ground. Just so had her Lord been prostrated in the Garden. A few weeks more of mental and physical agony then, with her eyes fixed on the image of "Christ Crucified", feeling herself sinking fast, Her Master and Spouse lifted her up and carried her to her heavenly reward. She was just thirty three years of age, having fulfilled a long course, indeed, in a very short time.

### *Model for our own Times*

For us today, confronted as we are with every kind of division and divisiveness both within and without the Church which is the Body of Christ, Catherine surely is a stirring example and *model* of uncompromising loyalty in what we might call "the common Catholic". When the higher echelons of the Church proved so weak, wayward and self-seeking; Catherine, socially and ecclesiastically a nonentity, a simple Dominican tertiary not even able to write, stood firm and proclaimed and witnessed her stand. She just loved her Church, the Church of Christ. And though in the eyes of Mammon she might appear to have been a failure, the beloved Church survived and herein she triumphed in the end. It survived to give us many other marvels, not the least being our own glorious martyrs. Here again the same lesson. When so many of the officers flinched and compromised, it was the "other ranks" who stood firm and failure was transformed into success. Thus does God, whose ways are not our ways, choose the weak to confound the strong. As the great Cardinal Newman said: "It is a rule of God's Providence that we should succeed by failure". "Courage", said this marvellous woman, "be *manful*". Marvellous because, though she apparently failed, her heart pressed in to the Body of Christ which is the Church, never for a moment faltered in its *loyalty*.

In this article, Father Crane examines some of the factors responsible for the inflation which is destroying this country's economy and which will destroy the country itself, if it is allowed to rage unchecked.

#### CURRENT COMMENT

## Inflation and Incentive

THE EDITOR

A COUPLE of months ago the papers carried a dreary report of the kind to which the long-suffering British public have become only too accustomed during the last quarter of a century. Two public services, we were told (*Times* 31/7/74), have lost between them £304m. during the past year: the share of the Post Office being £128.1m. and that of the Central Electricity Generating Board £176m. All this in a year.

### *No Right to Services at less than Cost*

Several points come immediately to mind. They are worth considering. One might begin with the thought that, had such losses occurred in private industry, those in charge would have been faced with the alternatives of declaring themselves bankrupt or engaging in an all-out effort to make ends meet. Greatly improved efficiency would have been the main imperative in this regard, but if the effort had to include increased prices, then those consumers unable to pay them would either have to do without electricity or, if they wanted to make use of it, forego other things in order that the increased prices might be paid. The choice

is a perfectly simple one and the proposition on which it rests equally simple—if electricity can only be produced at a price which not all can pay, then not all can have it. No one has a God-given right to be endowed with light and heating and fuel at less than the cost of producing them; the same applies to a whole host of other services, including those of the Post Office.

### *Subsidies and Inflation*

This proposition sounds ruthless. It is not, however, as ruthless as it sounds; and this for two reasons. In the first place, genuinely hard cases can be given electricity vouchers as a supplement to their income in the same way that old-age pensioners in the G.L.C. area are given transport vouchers in the shape of free passes on London buses; but there is no reason, especially in these inflationary days, why, in furtherance of this purpose, the whole population of London should be given free bus rides, any more than there is reason why the population of Britain should be provided with electricity or postal or health services below cost price. In the second place, the hardship suffered by many were electricity sold at cost price, would be far more apparent than real. It would be, in fact, not a hardship, but an inconvenience. What I mean is this—the rise in electricity prices, were electricity sold at cost price, would not necessarily deprive them of electricity: what it would mean is that, if they wanted to use it as before, they would have to give up the purchase of other less important goods and services they were in the habit of buying in order to have, at the new, higher prices, the same quantity of electricity as before. What this means is that, to meet the new electricity prices, they would have to reduce their standard of living, which was previously subsidized through the public provision of electricity at less than cost price. Is there anything wrong in this?

On the contrary, is it not clear that such a withdrawal of demand from relative non-essentials, necessitated now by

the need to buy essentials publicly provided at least at their cost of production, would do a great deal to uncoil the present inflationary spiral in the economy? Is not this precisely what we require at the moment — not fatuous exhortations from politicians to recapture “the Dunkirk spirit” and so on, but the realization forced on us through our pockets that the subsidized standard of living we have enjoyed since the last war is now a thing of the past; that, hard cases apart, no citizen of this country has any right to live on tick; to claim as of right a standard of living beyond that earned by his own sweat? Is it not clear that, were this state of affairs to prevail, though prices of some essentials might be high, the inflationary thrust would be considerably lessened throughout the economy?

### *Proletarian Mentality and Inflationary Drive*

As I write these lines, I am very well aware that I am touching no more than a small part of the inflationary problem; but it is by no means an insignificant one. This becomes clear if the whole of what is called the public sector of industry and social service is considered just for a moment. The degree of subsidized living provided through this sector is quite fantastic. Health, housing, education at school, training-college and university level, post-office services and those of nationalized industry, travel by rail and so on—all these are being provided at less than market price and, in some cases, free of charge. Which means that the recipients of these services are living at a level and expect, as of right, to continue to live at a level well beyond that justified by their income; in other words, they are living on tick. Which means that there is now built into British society a proletarian mentality and into our economy an inflationary drive which will only go when—again, hard cases apart—the citizens of this country are forced to pay at least the true market price for those goods and services which are publicly provided.

Let me say straightaway at this point that I favour in no way the public provision of those goods and services which can be made available by private enterprise. I say this because I am quite convinced that public enterprise makes for inefficiency in innumerable ways. For example, the very absence of what competition there is still in private enterprise, lulls the management of any public enterprise into a false sense of security, the political setting within which public enterprise is, by nature, placed means so often that the economic factor takes second place in the calculations of those who manage it; the knowledge that it can be rescued through the writing off of losses hardly makes for efficiency. So one might go on, producing perfectly sound arguments in favour of private enterprise run on a reasonably competitive basis as far more efficient than its public counterpart and, therefore, as the system most likely to give the citizen the services he needs at lowest cost. And, if it be argued against this, that industrial competition too often results in the emergence of private monopoly, which is itself inefficient and unlikely to give the citizen-consumer the service he expects, the answer, surely, is that, however unsatisfactory private monopoly may be, state monopoly is more unsatisfactory still. And the reason, surely, is clear enough. It is that the state monopoly that is a socialized industry can do and does what private monopoly cannot do; it can bring to its aid, bolster up its inefficiency with the whole power of the State; use the whole power of the State, in other words, to exploit the citizen-consumer, pouring in subsidies, for example, at the expense of the tax-payer, to promote an objective dictated not by economic need, but by technocratic ambition, as in Concord; or to cover losses due to labour trouble and absenteeism, as in the coal-mining industry; or to bolster inefficiency, as is probably the case with the Post Office over recent years. In writing, then, as I have written earlier in this article, that public services should be paid for at cost,

I am not implying that public services are efficiently produced. On the contrary, I am convinced that a great many of them would be all the better, far more satisfactory from the citizen-consumer's point of view, if they were privately produced. Even so, it remains true that even public services provided and paid for on a basis of true economic cost represent a policy whose successful pursuit today would do much to take the sting out of the inflation which not only besets, but bids fair to ruin us. For the application of this policy would mean that we would be well on the way to learn—as we can only learn through our pockets—to live *within* and not *beyond* our means, as we have been living for the past twenty-five years. Were this situation to be brought about by firm political action, this country, and ourselves with it, would be well on the way to recovery.

### *Anthony Wedgwood Benn*

Which brings us to Anthony Wedgwood Benn. The day after the papers carried the news of a £304m. loss incurred last year by two public industries, the Secretary of State for Industry publicly committed the Labour Government to the nationalization of shipbuilding and its associated industries of marine-engine building and ship repairing. And why? According to Benn, in order that it might be streamlined—"rationalized" used to be the word in the thirties—and enabled, thereby, to compete effectively in world markets. But that implies an increase in efficient production which, as we have seen above, is precisely what public ownership, however masked, does not give. Far from increasing efficiency and, thereby, the competitive position of an industry, the general effect of nationalization of this sort—witness the docks—is to reduce both. This hoary old "rationalizing" or "streamlining" argument, which Benn has pulled out of the cupboard, has been used for years, whenever government has sought to take over an industry or private and public monopolies have sought to buy out competitors. The last time we had this nonsense was when

BOAC amalgamated with BEA: is it just a coincidence that, according to present forecasts, BAC (which both now are) thinks it will have a difficult time paying wages when this article is published? We have heard this "rationalization" argument about the Post Office for years, yet the postal services of this country are worse now and far more expensive than ever they were before. And we have heard the same argument, too, with regard to the coal mines, the docks, the railways and everything else that government has taken over. Yet, in each case, we have not had a better product or service at a cheaper price, but a worse product at a dearer price or, very infrequently, a slightly improved product at a killing price. And the reason in each case is clear—public servants at the head of public enterprises tend to go to sleep, overcome by the false sense of security which the political nature of their appointment tends to wrap round them. Freed from the spur of competition, far removed from public clamour, the prodding of shareholders and the nudging of directors, they see their job mainly as that of letting the industry they govern tick over in safe propriety to the satisfaction of politicians, who know next to nothing about it; realizing, as they do so, that losses can be made good out of the public till in the same way that the coal mines, the docks, the railways, the Post Office and the Electricity Board have made them good.

This is hardly a recipe for success, yet Britain's shipbuilding industry is going to have to swallow it and at a moment, incidentally, when it is at the point of mini-boom, with its order books full for three years. Why, then, is the deed to be done; what is Benn's motive in promoting this ludicrous policy? One can only agree with Mr. Clifford Baylis, Director of the Shipbuilders and Repairers National Association, that Mr. Benn's proposals "are based on political doctrine rather than the need to improve the efficiency and prosperity of our industries" (*Times* 1/8/74).

### *National Prosperity and the Individual Citizen*

Efficiency and prosperity are not, of course, the only

things in life, but they are essential to any country's welfare and they will be brought about only to the extent that the citizen himself is prosperous because he takes advantage of the opportunity offered him of working hard and well. The point I am trying to make is that there can be no genuine prosperity in a country apart from that of its individual citizens. To grasp it, one has only to ask what makes a man want not only to work, but to work hard and well. The answer that comes at once is the good and prosperity of his family. Once a man knows that the harder and better he works the more there is from his work for himself and his wife and children, he will not need to be pushed to do his work. He will work hard and well in order that his family may prosper and the country as a whole will prosper with him from his work.

### *The Most Sensible thing to Do*

It seems to me, therefore, that the most sensible—and, indeed, necessary—thing that any government can do in this particular country at this particular time is to work for a general arrangement under which each who works in any capacity in industry or the professions or at any job anywhere should know, in the first place, that he will certainly put into his pocket (and not into someone else's) each week or each month the full and true value of what he produces through his work and that, if he works harder and better, he will put still more into his pocket; secondly, he must be made to realise that (hard cases, as always, excepted) it is *only* through work of this kind that he can put anything into his pocket at all. This means an end to state-provided subsidies and to "free" social services of every kind, though not to income supplements provided by government, as a *last resort*, to assist, *not* industrial lame ducks, but individual hard cases of every sort. It means—taking another angle—an end to the barriers which constrict and narrow the citizens opportunity of working and/or prevent him from receiving in return for the work he

does the full value of what he produces; it means an end to those other barriers, too, which deny him the opportunity of working harder when he wants to gain more, or make it no longer worth his while to do so. In a word, it means that the disincentives laid against individual, working effort of every sort by lay-about big business, lay-about big unions and lay-about big government must be brought to an end. It was St. Paul, not Adam Smith, who said that if a man was not prepared to work, then he should not eat. This is precisely what I am advocating—a situation in which a man eats as he works, as necessary cure for an inflation caused by a situation—largely manufactured by government ineptitude—in which the average citizen, denied any spur to work as hard as he should, is feverishly trying to consume more than he is allowed to produce. I hasten to add once again, and to emphasize, that this is *not* the citizen's fault. It is the fault of successive post-war governments, Conservative as well as Labour, whose totally misguided attempts to regulate the economy of this country and play nanny to the British people have left them largely and understandably without the will to produce because largely deprived by government stupidity of any motive for doing so. What this country needs, if it is to be done once and for all with inflation and discover again the kind of economic prosperity that builds true strength, is the restoration of true incentive. This can mean only one thing—the re-establishment of the family motive as the driving force behind an open economy which is, at one and the same time, the expression and shield of a genuinely free society.

### *A Matter of Direction*

I am not so simple as to suggest that this can be achieved overnight. What I am suggesting is that the only government worth having in this country at the present time is one which, at the very least, will set its sights in this direction; seeking by every means open to it to lift the British people out of their present proletarian condition,

which successive governments of either hue have relentlessly thrust upon them since the last war. A government which at least tries to do this is almost infinitely preferable to the latter-day Socialism which paralyzed the second half of Mr. Heath's administration or the opportunistic easy-riding that brought Mr. Wilson's minority government to an all-time low. There is no hope from either of these quarters unless those in charge of affairs mend their ways; until morally brave men at the top cry enough and get down to the task of releasing the British people from the servitude to which, I am afraid, so many of them have subconsciously been conditioned during past years. What we have to work for is a situation in which every citizen is made fully responsible for his own livelihood and provided with the incentive he must have if, as a true human being, he is to gain it.

### *Political Parties and the Restoration of Incentive*

I do not think that the Labour Party, as at present constituted, is capable of this kind of move; at base it is too concerned with ideological prejudices to be capable of making it. The Conservatives are a timid lot, themselves split now more than they realise as a result of Mr. Heath's experiment in suburban-run Socialism, which clouded the second half of his administration and, in the end, finished it off. There are, however, signs that some Conservatives are aware to some extent of the direction in which things should go. On the day Mr. Benn committed the Labour Government to the take-over of Britain's shipbuilding industry, Mr. Whitelaw had this to say to a gathering at Alnwick Castle (*Times* 1/8/74): "We are faced with very genuine anxieties from people who are not interested in doctrinaire political arguments and party squabbles. They just want to earn a secure livelihood for themselves and their families . . . If we as a nation are to succeed, we must understand these feelings and those who seek to lead must satisfy them". That is good, but does Mr. Whitelaw really understand that what people want is not merely "to earn a secure

livelihood for themselves and their families", but to earn it in their own right as responsible human beings and not as wards of a supposedly omnicompetent State? Does Mr. Whitelaw see this and, if he does, is he prepared in his mind to draw the appropriate conclusion, which is that the business of government in Britain now is to get out of the lives of its people and not further into them; in other words, to do its best to leave them alone in order that they may be encouraged to live their lives and earn their living in peace. I wonder if Mr. Whitelaw is thinking in these terms. I feel rather sure that Mr. Heath is not. Mental flexibility is not his strong point. He has been captured too recently by the Webbs to be enabled to get their gas-and-water Socialism easily out of his system.

### *A Sensible Statement*

Not long before Mr. Whitelaw spoke, Sir Keith Joseph, a much underestimated political thinker, said at Upminster (*Times* 24/6/74): "Thirty years of increasing state ownership and control have so weakened the economy that its socialist critics can use the very weakness created as justification for still further collectivism. The only conceivable basis for prosperity rests on a healthy competitive private sector, a market economy within a framework of humane laws and institutions."

Sir Keith's words portray the Benn syndrome exactly. His concluding sentence sums up my own thesis to a very fair extent. He went on in his speech to show how the Conservative brand of pragmatism, which can be its strength but also its greatest weakness, had trapped the Party since the war into an increasingly Socialist approach to the problems of Britain's economy. Conservative governments, he said, had not considered it practicable to reverse the vast bulk of the "accumulated detritus of Socialism" which they found whenever they returned to office. He went on:

"So we tried to build on its uncertain foundations

instead. Socialist measures and Socialist attitudes have been very persuasive . . .

"I must take my share of the blame for following too many of the fashions. We are now more socialist in many ways than any other developed country outside the Communist block; in the size of the public sector, the range of controls and the telescoping of net income.

"And what is the result? Compare our position to day with that of our neighbours in Germany, Sweden, Holland, France. They are no more talented than we are. Yet, compared with them, we have the longest working hours, the lowest pay and the lowest production per head. We have the highest taxes and the lowest investment.

"We have the least prosperity, the most poor and the lowest pensions. We have the largest nationalized sector and worst labour troubles."

That is the statement of an honest man. It represents a very fair portrayal of the disagreeable ingredients of what is at present the once-famed "British way of life". It is an extremely unpleasant picture. If more politicians can bring themselves to think as honestly as Sir Keith and then to act as vigorously as they think, there will be hope once again for this country. If they do not, we shall be wedged inevitably into the Socialist "paradise" of Anthony Wedgwood Benn. I can imagine no worse fate for a once free people. My one impulse if and when that ugly prospect approaches reality would be to get out of this country and run as fast as I can.

Until recently, one could be certain that practising Catholics would be opposed to Marxism either as a political and economic theory or as an actual method of running a country. There has been a considerable change in this regard, and some Catholic-Marxist interaction now ranges from fairly harmonious discussion to active political co-operation.

In the following pages, the Author offers some ideas which may be of help in understanding this somewhat unexpected development.

This article is taken, with acknowledgement, from our Australian contemporary, "Social Survey".

## Marxism for Christians

BY W. G. SMITH, S.J.

A DOCUMENT now widely distributed in mainland China is said to contain the plan drawn up by the late Lin Piao for a revolution against Chairman Mao's regime. Two statements contained in it have certainly been the object of the government's particular hostility: firstly, the judgment that "the state is well off, while the people are poor"; and secondly, the proposition that is really a policy proposal, that "when people are well off, the state is strong".

One reaction to these "bourgeois" criticisms—they are clearly taken seriously—has been the mounting of an extensive propaganda campaign to convince people of the virtues of a simple, hard life: the true Communist citizen lives frugally and puts his surplus money in the bank—and this makes him happy. Propaganda teams tour the villages calling upon people to live "in bitter struggle and to make deposits in aid of socialist construction".

## *Efficiency*

The point is that large numbers of the Chinese people still seem to need convincing that the economic and social principles and practice of the Communist Regime are honest and likely to be successful in giving them a more satisfactory life in a reasonable time. Other propaganda campaigns, both past and present, provide the same indication.

The Chinese are not alone among the people of established Communist States in having this doubt. The Russians, the Czechs, the Hungarians, the East Germans have all shown that they have serious doubts about the essential goodness and wisdom of their rulers and their methods of ruling: there is much inequality, and much state interference in private life, there are food and other shortages, restrictions on such simple human liberties as freedom of association, of speech, of the press, and of migration, and the people are not at all convinced of the necessity of these defects and restrictions.

Given these facts, all well known and easily verifiable, it is remarkable to see the attraction that both Communist theory and Communist regimes have for many persons in non-Communist countries, who would consider themselves devoted to the achievement of human development through the socially responsible exercise of personal freedom.

## *Christians*

This is particularly true of some professing Christians; for it has been accurately said that what Aristotle was to the Church of the Middle Ages, these persons would have Marx be to the Church of today.

The apparent basis for this attitude is dissatisfaction with some social conditions and the assumption that the economic and socio-political structures of the industrialized non-Communist countries and of their former colonies are totally corrupt and incapable of reform. The cause of this

corruption is the "capitalist spirit". In other words, society as we know it in Australia and similar countries is said to have been organized on the principle that man is to be valued not according to what he is, but completely according to the success of his economic achievements, and society itself valued according to the magnitude of its gross national product. This merely quantitative, measurable framework is not just inadequate, but is destructive of humanity, and man can only be saved from its demoralizing effects if it is uprooted completely and a *qualitative* framework set up in its place, a framework based on the ability of man to feel joy, to create beauty, to find truth, to develop in freedom, to achieve responsibility for what he does and becomes.

Here, a dilemma faces the Christian who has accepted the notion of the absolute evil of the "capitalist" system prevailing in his society—while his understanding of Christianity forces him to pass a totally adverse judgment on a society organized *merely* for maximum economic profit, his faith is not capable, because it deals with values and not with techniques, of providing him with a political programme for the total overthrow of the offending society and its replacement by one in which human freedoms and values are the motivating factors. (A further complication is the charge that the Churches have all compromised and corrupted themselves to a notable degree by conforming to the system.)

It is here that Marxism comes in, for Marxism does claim to be a scientific system, the science of history, derived from the observation of reality. Marx himself did not claim to be a prophet or a social reformer setting out a better blueprint for society: "Communism is not for us *a state of affairs* which is to be established, *an ideal* to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call communism the *real* movement which abolished the present state of things" (*The German Ideology*). Engels spoke similarly: "modern Socialism (Marxism) is nothing but the reflex in thought of what takes place in fact" (*Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*).

## New Social Order

Further, Marxism not only points to the abolition of the capitalist system but to a new social order in which human freedom will flower: "the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things. The State is not abolished; it dies out . . . The extraneous objective forces that have hitherto governed history pass under the control of man himself. Only from that time, will the social causes set in movement by him have, in the main and in a constantly growing measure, the results intended by him . . . It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom. Man, at last the master of his own form of social organization, becomes at the same time the lord over nature, his own master—free" (*Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*).

The assertion of the total corruption of "capitalist" society is itself a Marxist proposition. Marx's analysis of capitalism brought him to the conclusion that the system contained self-contradictory elements—the driving force of the profit motive and the exploitation of the working class by the property-owning class—that would inevitably bring about its self-destruction. There is no avoiding this, because man's intentions and attempts to shape reality do not in fact shape it; only material, economic structures do. Marxism claims to know how these are shaping history and how they will continue to do so: "What matters is *what is* and what one will have to do historically because of this reality".

## Comfort

This assertion has been a comfort to some worried Christians. They cherish a vision of a free human society; but they have not been able, through Christian belief, to achieve any certainty that the vision will be realized. As individuals, they can hope and work for the realization of their hope; but the magnitude of the complications and difficulties in their way fatally discourages them. Marxism,

on the other hand, claims not to deal in hope, but in certainty; it claims to be the scientific knowledge of reality, and asserts that no matter how bad and difficult things are, there are unchangeable and irresistible forces operating which will bring about the best of all possible worlds.

Christian hopes for society will therefore be realized, Christian values will triumph, through the operation of economic determination and the class war. The sensible thing to do is to co-operate with the wave of the future, even to see theology itself as a study of society in the process of change; for this process can surely be considered, if it is inevitable, as the operation of God in the world. The Christian life can also be brought down to an effort to be honest and loving in the course of the revolution.

The curious thing about all this is that Christians who seek this kind of co-operation with full-scale Marxists and Marxism are handing themselves over to a group of men whose assumptions about society and life differ hardly at all from these of the extreme capitalist theorists who are the current "bad men" for both the Marxists and their Christian associates.

Both groups define their theories as "sciences" with laws as precise and unavoidable as those governing physics and chemistry. The extreme capitalists have argued that there is no need or use to restrain greed and selfishness in their search for the maximization of profit; for the laws of the market are independent of man's consciousness and psychological processes and will produce a state of general well-being in spite of man's faults. With Marxism, the process is similar, man may think and try to act as he pleases, but history will move him inevitably into the promised land of plenty because of the inbuilt laws of the economic structure.

The ultimate difficulty about these similar acts of faith is that they both try to reduce man's striving to the quantitative area and so close his eyes to other realities. This is being clearly brought out at present by the way in which both capitalists and Communists in developing countries are raising the same protests about the ecological question, say-

ing that it is a deceitful tactic proposed by the rich nations to prevent the development of the poor nations. The reason is that the rational preservation of the environment does not help rapid development if this is defined in purely quantitative terms.

Quality of life, in those terms, is reduced to the level of consumption—if people have adequate shelter and enough to eat and wear, why should one ask too many questions too quickly about living space, location of industry, industrial pollution, etc.? Inevitably, quantity will produce quality in the long run—hopefully, not too long!

The danger latent in this theoretical reliance on the quantitative lies not merely in its inadequacy, but in the tendency inherent in materialism of resorting to force to keep or bring people where measurement and statistics say they should be—even to eliminate those who persist in refusing to conform. And there are always plenty such; for the materialistic theorist, capitalist or Communist, cannot eliminate the fact of changing human valuation and choice, or the restless thrust of the mind for new ways.

In fact, the objects of the economic process are objects of human drives and desires, and they take on economic significance only as human valuations are put on them—a demand curve, for example, is not a physical fact of nature, it represents a range of *possible* human choices; and costs are not *out there* somewhere in measurable reality, they are opportunities foregone, choice decisions in human consciousness. These are the facts that make a truly “scientific” programme for human reform and development an impossibility and the search for it a trap.

The more complete and human approach to social change is still that which takes fully into account the elements of purpose, choice and obligation—what *ought* to be as well as what is—which relies on reason and persuasion rather than guns and prisons, which accepts uncertainty and long effort, and which has a bias towards the *actual* freedom of the individual rather than towards the dominance of centralized authority.

This way is not only more human; but, in the end, it is likely to be more efficient precisely because it is more complete. Neither capitalism nor Marxism has been able so to satisfy people's human needs that reasonable peace and contentment result. The failures of unbridled capitalism hardly need emphasizing, but it would be well to remind ourselves that Marxism has so far led to a power of man over man even more severe and unsuccessful than under capitalism.

It is now clear that after the first revolutionary enthusiasm, Communist ideology effects a return to the conditions of the Feudal State, in which economic and political powers are exercised by the same control centre. The State, in these circumstances, or those who run it, can alone be sure of participating according to desire in the product of the given society. The Soviet Union, for example, can afford the luxury of space travel and nuclear weapons without being excessively distracted by the desire of its people for less than luxury consumer goods; but it has still not been able to provide a food supply comparable to that which its capitalist competitors can ensure for their people.

A third way, one between capitalism and Communism, must therefore be sought. It is more fitting for Christians. The key to it is not the power of any one group over the others, but co-operation between workers and employers, and the extension of ownership. The principle of "we want more" must not be taken as the only principle of action; for it is both inflationary in its effect and destructive of any hope of teamwork in industry: social progress can be blocked not only by liberal employers' associations, but also by shortsighted trade unions and, in this situation, the interests of the consumer and the needs of the State go down the drain too.

The rate of inflation has increased alarmingly in recent months. The price index can now rise in a single month by as much as in a whole year in the past. This first article in a series of three examines the evil consequences of inflation. Later articles will discuss the causes of inflation and the policies called for in the present situation.

## Inflation (1)

J. M. JACKSON

WE have become accustomed during the years since the end of World War II to living with inflation. The prices of most goods and services have risen steadily. Price reductions, on the other hand, are comparatively rare. There have been times when some food products have been in unduly great supply and the price has fallen temporarily. We have also seen the temporary price cuts that individual shops may make from time to time on particular goods. These temporary reductions in a limited number of prices do not hide the obvious upward trend in virtually all prices. The only real exceptions are some new lines where the increasing scale of production has permitted prices to move against the general trend. An outstanding example is the substantial fall in the price of pocket electronic calculators. But even in lines such as this a point is likely to be reached where no further benefits will result from increasing the scale of production and thereafter these goods will move in line with the general changes in the price level.

Inflation, of course, does not involve a uniform rise in prices. Some prices will rise more than others. Thus between 1963 and 1969 the prices of consumer goods and services rose by 26.5 per cent. Food prices in this period rose by 25 per cent and clothing and household durables

by 15 per cent but house prices rose by 59 per cent. In general, one would expect services to rise in price more sharply than manufactured goods. This is because price increases in the manufacturing sector are restrained to some extent by increasing productivity, whereas in the service sector wages rise but there is no offsetting increase in productivity.

In most of the post-war period, inflation has been at comparatively modest rates. Between 1945 and 1964, prices just about doubled; between 1963 and 1966 there was an increase of something like 4 per cent a year. This kind of rate of increase has, in the past, been a cause of concern; certainly there has in the past been anxiety when the rate of inflation has risen somewhat above this kind of level. At the present time, however, we are experiencing very much more rapid inflation. An increase of 3 or 4 per cent is perhaps possible in a month whereas at times the overall increase for a year has been kept within this kind of limit. Now we may even find it difficult to keep the annual rate to 10 or 15 per cent.

### *The Evils of Inflation*

Inflation used to be recognised as a serious economic evil. We can consider its effects under two main headings, the distributional and the overall economic effects. By the distributional effects, I mean the way in which inflation affects different groups of people in different ways. Perhaps the most obvious point to be made here is that inflation is a much more serious matter for those whose incomes are fixed than for those who can ensure that their incomes increase at least as rapidly as prices. For all the complaints that workers and their trade unions may make, over most of the postwar period wages have increased more rapidly than prices and real living standards have risen.

Perhaps the worst hit by inflation have been pensioners. If pensions are fixed finally at retirement, it follows that the longer a person draws pension the more his purchasing

power is decreased by inflation. State retirement pensions have, of course, been increased to take account of inflation. Indeed, these pensions, like most social security benefits, have increased more than enough to meet the rising cost of living. State retirement pensions, though, provide less than a bare minimum for subsistence. Many people draw pensions from their former employment. At present, such pensions are generally fixed at the time of retirement, and a person goes on drawing that same pension for the rest of his days. The longer he lives and the more rapidly inflation occurs, the faster his standard of living falls.

If some people lose through inflation (pensioners and others who are receiving any form of fixed money payment) there will be others who gain. Consider, for example, a loan. One person lends another £100 and asks for 5 per cent interest. This may represent a fair reward for the sacrifice the lender makes in giving up the use of his own money for the period of the loan. (He cannot know that by making the loan he will not lose the opportunity to put his £100 to some profitable use, or that during the period of the loan there will not be some emergency in which the £100 would be of great use to him.) If the loan is for one year, the lender will receive at the end of the year £105. If, however, prices generally have risen by 3 per cent, then the purchasing power of the £105 he receives will be equivalent to about £102 in terms of the purchasing power of money at the beginning of the year. The real rate of interest is only 2 per cent, and this may be less than a fair return for the sacrifice that the lender has made. If this is unfortunate from the point of view of the lender, it is equally apparent that the borrower will be quite happy with this kind of situation. In this kind of mild inflation, there may be a strong incentive for business men to borrow to finance new investment and so help to maintain a prosperous economy.

That such mild inflation may act as a stimulus to economic activity does not alter the fact that inflation involves injustice. It is wrong that people who lend money should have to accept an effective rate of interest that is less

than sufficient to compensate them for the sacrifice involved. Indeed, the rate of interest may be non-existent or even negative. Suppose again that a loan is made at 5 per cent for a year, but now prices rise by 10 per cent in the course of the year. The lender now receives back £105 for every £100 lent but in terms of real purchasing power it is only equivalent to £95 at the start of the year. Although the lender has received back a bigger sum of money than he parted with when making the loan, it will buy him 5 per cent less than the money he had initially. The lender is entitled to receive a proper rate of return on his loan, and that means the return at the end of the loan of a sum of money that will give him an appropriate increase in purchasing power over that of the original sum loaned.

Of course, attempts may be made to overcome such harmful effects of inflation. At the present time, for example, interest rates are substantially higher than they were ten or fifteen years ago. It was once possible to get a house mortgage at something like 5 per cent. Now the rate is 11 per cent and it is by no means certain that it will not rise further. But even at such rates of interest, the real return may still be small or even negative. Moreover, these high rates of interest may also have serious consequences for borrowers. Consider, for example, the difference for the would-be house purchaser of an 11 per cent interest rate as compared with a 6 per cent rate. Suppose he earns £3,000 a year and is borrowing £9,000 to purchase a £10,000 house. The rate of interest at 11 per cent means an annual interest payment of £990; with tax relief at the current rate, this will mean a net payment of £660. With the rate of interest at 6 per cent, he would have incurred a net payment of £360. The difference represents 10 per cent of his income. Of course, if he can manage to take the mortgage in the first place, a few years will see the burden of interest charges greatly reduced as his income rises with inflation and the payments remain fixed. What matters, however, is that in combination with the present level of house prices, the high interest rates can impose a severe burden

at the start or even put house purchase beyond the means of many couples.

Considerable thought has been given to the problem of 'inflation proofing' pensions. The state pension proposals of the Labour Party at different times have taken the view that a person's pension should be geared to changes in the average wage level in the country. This would work in two ways. First, the pension to which a person is entitled on retirement would increase proportionately to the general wage level. If a man retired on a pension equal to 65 per cent of the national average wage, his pension would remain at this proportion as wages increased. In so far as there was a real increase in wages, the pension would not merely retain its purchasing power but would actually buy more as time went on. Secondly, a dynamic element would be introduced into the calculation of the pension. All schemes for fundamental improvements in our pension system involve relating both contributions and pensions to income. But in times of inflation, a man may be earning £1,000 early in his career but retire on a salary of perhaps £10,000 forty years later. This may represent only the equivalent of perhaps £2,500 at the start of his career. He will have been contributing in his early years at rates appropriate to his low earnings. A pension related to his average earnings over his whole career would be heavily influenced by the early low earnings. What is proposed is that one should not calculate a simple lifetime average earnings for the pensioner. Instead, one would take a man's earnings in each year of his career as a percentage of the national average for that year, and take an average of these percentages. Thus a man who in each year of his career earned 50 per cent of the national average would get a pension appropriate to that level of earnings. If, of course, one averaged his money earnings, his lifetime average earnings would be much less than the national average at the time of his retirement.

One may try to offset the effects of inflation in this way. One might introduce loans in a form where repayment of the sum borrowed was tied to an index of prices. Thus if

somebody borrowed £100 for five years at 5 per cent and prices generally rose 20 per cent during that period, the borrower would have to repay not £100 but £120. (He might also be required to increase the interest payment in a similar way.) Such attempts to offset the effects of inflation cannot be entirely successful, however. There is, moreover, the danger that trying to offset these effects will encourage an attitude of complacency towards the serious economic and moral evil of inflation.

There are, of course, reasons why governments may be complacent about inflation. It may be easier for them to accept a measure of inflation than to take the unpopular courses of action necessary to check the upward movement of prices. They may be reluctant to apply measures that will damp down the level of economic activity, or to impose incomes policies that would control the pressure on prices from wage costs. In addition, the government may benefit financially from inflation. When prices are rising, the revenue is likely to be buoyant. Income tax yields will, unless allowances are corrected regularly, increase more than proportionately to the level of wages. Take the example of a man who has a total of £800 in tax free allowances. His income rises as a result of inflation from £1,000 to £1,100. If the rate of tax is 33 per cent, he will find that his taxable income rises from £200 to £300 and tax from £66 to £99. Although income has gone up by 10 per cent, tax has risen by 50 per cent. As a proportion of the man's income, the tax has risen from 6.6 per cent. to 9.0 per cent. This may have been a fair relationship between the tax liabilities of two men with these incomes at the earlier date. If, however, prices rise by 10 per cent, a man with £1,100 at the later date is no better off than when he had £1,000 earlier. But because his tax allowances have not been adjusted to reflect the change in the value of money, he is having to pay proportionately more tax and his standard of living falls.

The danger then is that the government will be complacent about inflation, despite its inevitable evils. We have

seen what these can be as far as their distributional effects are concerned. There are also the now all too familiar effects on the balance of payments. If our prices rise more rapidly than those of our competitors, we will find it more difficult to sell our exports and imports will appear attractive relatively to home produced goods. As a result, the balance of payments deteriorates. It is tempting to argue that this effect of inflation can be overcome by floating the currency. This argument, however, should not be too readily accepted.

### *A Floating Exchange Rate*

It may be useful at this stage to examine the argument for a floating exchange rate. The basic case for a floating exchange rate is that it will automatically adjust to changes in the balance of payments. If the balance of payments deteriorates, the exchange rates will change in such a way as to bring the balance of payments back into equilibrium.

Take a situation where the pound is worth \$2.40 and the balance of payments is in deficit. More people will be wanting to change pounds into dollars/and other foreign currencies/to pay for imports than are wanting to change foreign currencies into pounds in order to pay us for our exports. The supply of sterling would be greater than the demand and it would fall in value relatively to other currencies. The rate against the dollar might fall to \$2.35. This means that the prices of goods trade internationally will appear to change. Suppose an American product is priced at \$240. At the old exchange rate of \$2.40 to the pound, a British buyer would need to take £100 to his bank in order to get the \$240 he needs to pay for the American product. If, however, the exchange rate has fallen to \$2.35, he will need about £102 in order to get the necessary dollars. This rise in the cost of imported goods, measured in sterling, will tend to discourage imports. Similarly, if a British article is priced at £100, the American buyer will be able to get the necessary sterling for \$235

instead of \$240. Thus British goods appear to be cheaper and our exports should increase. The increase in exports and decrease in imports should bring about an improvement in the balance of payments. The exchange rate should fall until the balance of payments is no longer in deficit.

This would not be the appropriate place to argue fully the case for and against floating exchange rates. Two points may be made briefly. First, the variability of exchange rates introduces an element of uncertainty into foreign trade. Secondly, there are international treaty obligations to be considered. Whilst we might prefer a system of freely floating exchange rates, it may not be the best policy to allow our currency to float in defiance of obligations we have accepted and the wishes of the rest of the world.

### *Conclusion*

There remain many aspects of inflation to be considered. The causes of inflation must be examined, together with a consideration of present difficulties and the measures that may be necessary to meet the situation.

*(To be continued)*

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What is “the fear of God” that is said to be “the beginning of wisdom?” Is it possible for a Catholic to have an honourable political career? I cannot see that Benedict Joseph Labre was either admirable or imitable. Why was he canonized?

## Any Questions?

WILLIAM LAWSON, S.J.

What is “the fear of God” that is said to be “the beginning of wisdom”?

Not being self-sufficient, we often become sharply aware of our dependence, and feel unequal to the present and inadequate to the near and distant future. That painful emotion can prompt the person to be as self-reliant as possible and to seek the necessary support. Fear is then an ingredient of natural virtue leading to self-preservation.

Our complete and permanent dependence is on God; and the fear that is a supernatural virtue is an acknowledgement that we are beholden to God for our existence and all the good that it contains, and it is awe in the presence of the infinite Being Who is incomprehensible, Whose will we must do always and everywhere, and on Whom we depend for redemption from our sins and for salvation. Our life could end in damnation, so, as Our Lord taught us, we must “fear Him, Who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell”. But the fear must not be craven: it has to be part of our love of God, a profound respect for the Being to Whom we are devoted, a knowledge of our weakness and wilfulness which could lead us to offend Him, and a desire for His grace so that we may remain faithful to Him. Fear of that kind is an appeal for help, in confidence that springs from love. It is self-knowledge leading to knowledge of God

and His Love, and to the "wisdom" which is delight in God and in the relationship which He has enabled us to establish with Him. St. Francis de Sales devotes several chapters of his *Treatise of the Love of God* to the fear which is the beginning of wisdom. In summary, his teaching is that we should not love God out of fear but fear Him out of love.

### Is it possible for a Catholic to have an honourable career in politics?

Surely! Adenauer and de Gaulle were Catholics and politicians and they have a high reputation as men of honour. Politics is said to be a dirty business, but it need not be. Government is necessary; it should be for the common good; and men of principle are needed to conduct it. There are many high-principled citizens willing to help their fellows by legislation and administration, and they find a personal satisfaction in public service.

All the same there are dangers to morals in a political career. Success means power, which is eagerly sought and reluctantly lost. Success and power could become ends in themselves instead of means to well-doing. The temptation is to serve oneself and one's party rather than one's country. Opportunities abound of feathering one's nest. At the moment the public has been alerted to the possibility of widespread political corruption because some of it has appeared on the surface in this country and the U.S.A. No judge would take presents from litigants appearing before him. Justice must not only be done, it must be seen to be done. Some politicians in a position to grant favours are not so careful.

One could, I hope, expect a practising Catholic to avoid bribery and corruption. There is, however, a more serious threat to integrity than the chance of financial gain. Faithfulness to principle is endangered by the demands of party allegiance. Members of Parliament and of Borough Councils, elected with the support of a political party, are

expected to vote on party lines—"to vote just as their leaders tell 'em to". They can hardly afford to have a conscience. If they voted according to conscience against their party's directive their political career could be finished. Expediency could prevail over truth.

I cannot see that Benedict Joseph Labre was either imitable or admirable. Why was he canonized?

He is certainly a surprising candidate for canonization. He would fit into the modern scene as a hippy or a drop-out, and would be indistinguishable from the crowd queueing for free soup, except perhaps, by being dirtier and more ragged than most. When he was a young man he was turned down by the superiors of a number of religious orders to which he applied for admission. So he became a tramp—of a special kind: his goal was always a place of religious pilgrimage. Perhaps he should be called the permanent pilgrim; but it is too respectable a description for a man who did not keep himself clean, but who was dirty with dirty dirt and, I should think, lousy. He visited the shrines of Aix-en-Provence and Paray-le-Monial in his own country, Einsiedeln in Switzerland, Compostella in Spain, and Assisi and Loretto in Italy. He ended up in Rome. He walked all the way, begged his bread, and slept rough. In Rome he spent his nights in the ruins of the Colosseum until failing health forced him to take refuge in a home for paupers. He died in Rome in 1783 at the age of thirty-five.

You could find any number of young men, in Rome and Avignon for example, who have opted out of comfortable middle-class circumstances to live on hand-outs and tramp the world. But they do not visit churches out of devotion and spend their lives in prayer. St. Benedict Joseph Labre is one of the Desert Fathers who took to the road. His manner of living is not recommended; but his love of God is admirable, and we could well ask his help in our efforts to "pray at all times".

**Answering the Devil, Our Lord quoted Deuteronomy, 8.3: "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God". What obligation have we to know the word of God? Have we a duty to read the Bible?**

There can't be an absolute universal duty of reading the Bible. It did not begin to be generally available until the invention of printing in the fifteenth century, and it will not be universally usable until everybody can read and can afford a copy. But the Scriptures are the most important writings in the history of mankind, in a class by themselves as that part of God's revelation which is written down. At least their teaching should be known.

The Church, from the beginning, has done her best to make the faithful familiar with the sacred text. Her central act of worship, the Sacrifice of the Mass was prepared for with Bible readings and homilies to explain them. The new liturgical books are a continuance of the old tradition. Their extended selection of Old Testament passages is welcome (but it is a pity the faithful cannot have their own copy of the text—they are back in the Middle Ages, listening, and not always hearing). That, for most Catholics, is the full extent of their acquaintance with the written word of God. Some of them could make a profitable daily habit of reading the Bible for five minutes.

But the revelation of God is God Himself, incarnated as Jesus Christ, the divine Word. He is the Word by Whom we live. His teaching is Himself. Knowledge of the New Testament is not primarily of the text but of Christ revealed in it. We have to accept His invitation, "Follow Me"—it has the force of a command—and in the power of His Spirit we have to be like Him.

# Book Review

## MORE LIKE THIS, PLEASE

**The Hungry Sheep** by John D. Sheridan; Arlington House, New Rochelle, N.Y., U.S.A., \$7.95:pp. 175. Also obtainable in this country from Pro Fide Book Service, 39, Blenheim Park Road, Croydon, Surrey.

Plans are afoot we learn (*Universe 21/6/74*) for providing the Church of the future with a better educated laity:

“Lay people need to be prepared and trained so that they know better how to live their lives in Christ, know what they believe and know how to influence people around them.

“Every priest will have to spend more time than he does at present in imparting the beginnings of this preparation and training to at least some of the people in his care.”

There are several points to be made in this context and I think they are worthy of note. The first concerns the double-assumption on which, it would appear, plans for a “better educated laity” are made to rest. This is that the *laity as a whole* are in a position to absorb this better education that is intended for them and that the clergy as a whole are capable of imparting it. I have to say with respect that this double-assumption appears to me to be quite unjustified. In order to see why, let us begin with the laity and then pass on to the clergy.

The first thing to note with regard to the laity as a whole is that conditions of modern life are such as to rule out the success of any general educational effort made on their account. These days, the average layman, as I have written before, has so much to cope with that he cannot be

expected to find or make time for the more intensive study of his religion. You might as well ask a good and busy parish priest to enrol for a degree course with the Open University. The parallel, I think, is fair: it is sad that it is not seen because failure to see it is going to mean a very considerable waste of time and money and energy, which can only end in frustration. Moreover, there is the all-important point—too often forgotten by contemporary clerical reformers within the Church—that a man's first duty is to his family and that a young husband and wife who, for Christ's sake, give themselves wholly to each other and their children, are giving God what He wants most from them both. It is frankly nonsensical to expect the generality of young husbands and wives to go beyond this point; asking them, when they have got through a hard day's work with patience and sacrifice and put the children to bed, to go bustling off to listen to young Father Bertwhistle's latest course in contemporary theology.

Where the laity as a whole are concerned, this simply cannot be done and they should not be expected, still less asked to do it. As a matter of fact, no one who knows anything of the layman's life today would dream of asking them to do it; which makes one wonder, of course, what kind of understanding of the ordinary layman's life is possessed by those clerics who persist in thinking of the average Catholic layman as a fit subject for further education. You may reply that *some* of them are. Precisely, I agree with you. These are the exceptions that prove the rule and these we have *got* to get hold of; the *few* who are in a position to absorb the education offered and use it in such a way that they serve as spearhead for the rest. Round them, at all levels in society, a consensus must be built. This is sound strategy; the *few* must penetrate and influence; round them the rest will build general support. Once again, this is sound strategy; far removed, I am afraid, from the somewhat simpliste outlook that advocates the chimera of Christian adult education for all.

Still on this point of adult education for the laity as a

whole, let us turn to the other arm of the assumption, which sees the clergy as a whole as educators. Ten years ago one would have said that most of them would have been without the time or indeed—and this without disparagement—the up-to-date knowledge and/or the expository power necessary for the job. A good teacher is very hard to find and there is no reason why a good parish priest should be a good teacher. Why pick on him for the job then? Why indeed? All this would have been valid criticism in the past. It is still valid today; but today there is the great additional difficulty that one does not know what kind of doctrine—or non-doctrine—one is going to get from a priest or religious. And, moreover, the situation will probably get worse as the steady erosion of doctrine in seminaries and religious houses of study—to say nothing of teachers training colleges and catechetical centres—continues apace. Under such circumstances, general adult education within the Church will do no more than generate an outsize Tower of Babel. Yet, appallingly enough, we are going forward most cheerfully with plans for its inauguration.

Where, then, do we go? Back to sound doctrine and intelligent strategy; to the build-up of the few at all levels and conditions of social life, who will permeate contemporary society outside the Church and serve as so many rallying-points within it. It is in this context that men like John Sheridan are significant. He is that rare type; a finely educated Catholic layman whose life is deep in his Faith, whose Faith, in fact, is his life. This is clear from this book that he has written. John Sheridan not only knows what he writes about, he loves what he writes about; and he loves it with every fibre of his being. He would make a first-class educator not only of a lay élite, but of a clerical élite as well. It is round men of this sort that a consensus is easily built. And the task, really, is not merely to find men like him, but to make them. I cannot go into this here, but it needs thinking over. What I do suggest is that readers should get hold of his book. It is not a schematic apologetic for the Faithful of the sort that Frank Sheed has done so

superbly well. It is, rather, a series of forays in the shape of chapters short, precise, very clearly written, each the product of a well-fed, percipient and disciplined mind set at the service of the Faith. The result is immensely satisfactory. I know a good many puzzled, but well-intentioned youngsters who would be given a lift by Sheridan's book. It is no substitute for, say, Frank Sheed's *Theology and Sanity*; it was never meant to be: where it serves is as an admirable complement to it. John Sheridan has the touch that makes the Faith come alive. We need more like him and we need more from him. I regard it as a compliment that a short and most excellent article he wrote for *Christian Order* last year holds an honoured place in this book.

I would imagine that John Sheridan talks as well as he writes. I see this kind of layman with this kind of mind as essential to the life of the Church today, more essential, I think, than ever before. Let us stop thinking, then, of adult education for the generality of Catholics. It is a waste of time. Let us think, rather, of supporting and building up the few who are loyal in their defence of Truth and first-class in their exposition of it. And let our adult educational effort take the form of finding and making more of them. The material is there if only we had the sense to go and look for it. John Sheridan's book, meanwhile, is warmly commended to readers of *Christian Order*.

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